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Mushroom Picking...



What Makes a Good Harvest?



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©Kit Skates *Lepiota rhacodes*



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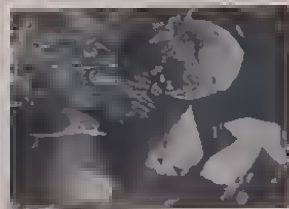


Forest Service



Bureau of Land
Management

Boletus edulis



What Makes a Smart Picker?

1. Know where mushrooms grow.

Forest ecosystems provide a diversity of plant, animal, and fungal species. The mushrooms we love to pick -- along with other fungi -- play many roles in these ecosystems, and are a vital part of a healthy forest. The increased demand for mushrooms brings with it an increased need to be considerate of the land, as well as of other pickers, when we harvest mushrooms.

2. Know how to harvest with care.

Improper techniques, such as raking, can damage mushrooms by breaking caps and stems. It can also damage mushroom habitat. Mushrooms damaged by improper harvesting or storage have little or no commercial value.

Know the mushroom before you pick it! Remember, not all mushrooms are edible, and some are poisonous. There are many guide-books available at bookstores, local libraries, and county extension offices to assist you with mushroom identification.

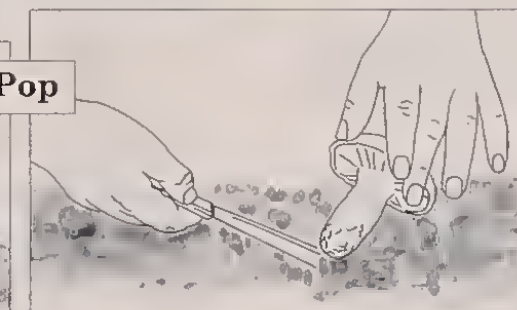
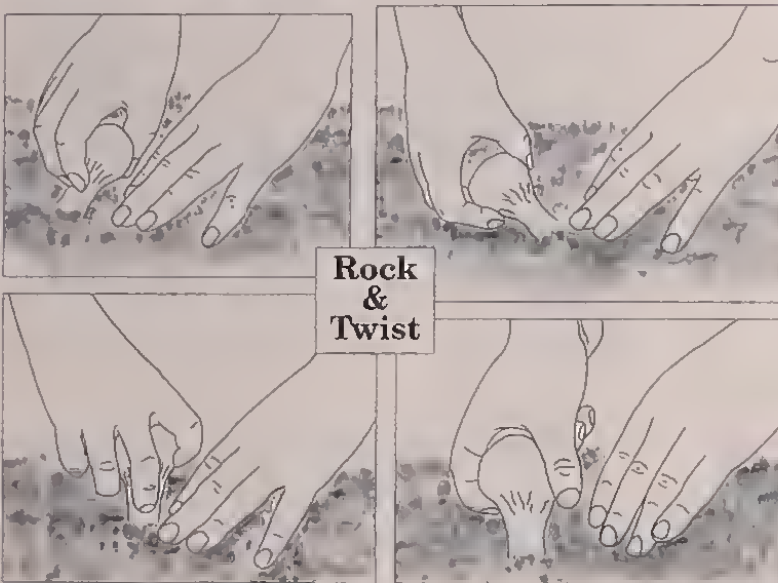
When locating mushrooms for harvest, disturb the ground as little as possible.

3. Know good harvesting techniques.

Depending upon the type of mushroom, there are three methods a picker should use to minimize resource damage during harvest:

- Grasp the mushroom at its base and gently rock and twist until it comes loose.
- Use a sharp knife to cut the mushroom off at ground level.
- Insert a narrow object like a stick or knife under the base while prying straight up and out of the ground. This method "pops" the mushroom out without disturbing the surrounding area or damaging the mushroom.

Remember to restore disturbed areas resulting from picking. This protects the underground portions of the fungi, which produce the mushrooms. Mushrooms will return most every year if we harvest carefully -- and the weather cooperates.



Cantharellus cibarius



What Makes Mushrooms Thrive?

Mushrooms are organisms known as fungi. Unlike green plants, fungi cannot use

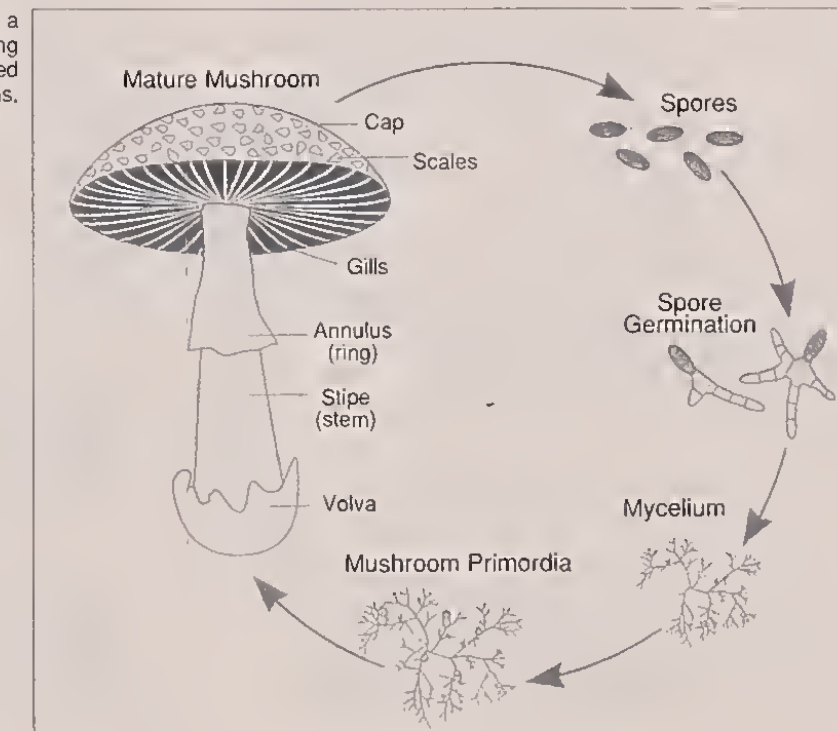
sunlight to make food, but use other living organisms or dead organic matter for food and moisture. That is why it is important to return the forest floor to a condition similar to what existed prior to harvest.

The mushroom is the fruiting part of the fungus, which produces millions of tiny spores that are spread by wind. Like a seed, spores germinate and grow when conditions are right ... so leaving older mushrooms that are starting to decay will provide the spores needed to grow future crops.

Some mushrooms receive their nourishment from living roots of nearby trees. Beneath the forest floor is a vast network of interwoven fungal threads collectively called mycelium (my-SEE-lee-um), which surround and penetrate tree roots. The fungus aids the tree in obtaining food and water, and protects the tree from disease-causing organisms. In turn, the fungus obtains food it cannot manufacture itself. Trees and mushrooms rely on each other for survival.

Other mushrooms receive their nourishment from decomposing logs, stumps, and other material that is found on the forest floor. This recycling process provides for soil productivity and creates habitat for numerous small animals.

Anatomy and life cycle of a typical mushroom showing many features that are used to identify mushrooms.





A Few General Rules to Follow

Pickers may be required to obtain either a "recreational use" permit or a "commercial use" permit. To find out exactly what you need and to get an update on local conditions, contact the agency office nearest the area where you'd like to harvest. Be aware that you are required to know the regulations affecting the area where you pick. We can assist you with that.

- There are areas where mushroom picking is not allowed, such as in designated wildernesses and research natural areas. Picking may be allowed on private lands -- but get permission first to prevent ill will! Know where picking is allowed. We can help you figure it out.

- While camping is generally allowed on most public land, commercial pickers may need an "industrial camping permit," and may not be allowed to camp in developed campgrounds.

- When camping and picking in undeveloped sites, maintain the natural beauty of the forest, and protect water sources. Leave the area you use "cleaner than you found it!" As for human wastes, bury them at least 100 feet away from streams, trails, and roads.

● Campfires may be restricted during periods of high fire danger. When they are permitted, ensure they are completely extinguished prior to leaving camp. Never leave your campfire unattended!

● Some public agencies have closed roads to protect wildlife, sensitive land resources, provide for public safety and reduce user conflicts. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on closed roads, though people are. Road closures help us maintain the healthy forest that supplies delicious mushrooms -- and other forest products. Please support our efforts!

Closing Thoughts...

Fungi (or mushrooms) are a vital part of ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest. They provide a wide range of benefits for all. Please do your part in taking care of this valuable natural resource by respecting the land and all forest visitors.

Practice Good Harvesting!!

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For more information, contact the office closest to your area of interest.

Forest Service Offices

Nature of the Northwest (Information Center)

800 NE Oregon Street (Rm. 177)
Portland, OR 97232
(503) 872-2750

Colville National Forest

765 S. Main
Colville, WA 99114
(509) 684-7000

Deschutes National Forest

1645 Hwy. 20 East
Bend, OR 97701
(541) 383-5300

Fremont National Forest

1300 South G St., HC 10, Box 337
Lakeview, OR 97630
(541) 947-2151

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

10600 NE 51st Circle
Vancouver, WA 98682
(360) 891-5000

Malheur National Forest

431 Patterson Bridge Rd., PO Box 909
John Day, OR 97845
(541) 575-3000

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

21905 64th Ave. W
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
(425) 775-9702

Mt. Hood National Forest

16400 Champion Way
Sandy, OR 97055
(503) 668-1700

Ochoco National Forest

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Prineville, OR 97754
(541) 416-6500

Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests

215 Melody Lane
Wenatchee, WA 98801-5933
(509) 662-4335

Okanogan Valley Office

1240 2nd Ave. S.
Okanogan, WA 98840-9723
(509) 826-3275

Olympic National Forest

1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW
Olympia, WA 98512-5623
(360) 956-2300

Rogue River National Forest

333 West 8th Street, PO Box 520
Medford, OR 97501-0209
(541) 858-2200

Siskiyou National Forest

200 NE Greenfield Rd., PO Box 440
Grants Pass, OR 97528-0242
(541) 858-2200

Siuslaw National Forest

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Corvallis, OR 97339
(541) 750-7000

Umatilla National Forest

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Pendleton, OR 97601
(541) 278-3716

Umpqua National Forest

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Roseburg, OR 97470
(541) 672-6601

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

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Baker City, OR 97814
(541) 523-6391

Willamette National Forest

211 East 7th Ave., PO Box 10607
Eugene, OR 97440-2607
(541) 465-6521

Winema National Forest

2819 Dahlia Street
Klamath Falls, OR 97601
(541) 883-6714

Bureau of Land Management District Offices

Oregon/Washington State Office

PO Box 2965
333 SW First Avenue
Portland, OR 97204-3440
(503) 808-6001

Burns District

HC74-12533 Highway 20 West
Hines, OR 97738
(541) 573-4400

Coos Bay District

1300 Airport Lane
North Bend, OR 97459-2000
(541) 756-0100

Eugene District

2890 Chad Drive,
PO Box 10226
Eugene, OR 97440
(541) 683-6600

Lakeview District

HC 10 Box 337
1300 South 'G' Street
Lakeview, OR 97630-0055
(541) 947-2177

Klamath Falls Field Office

2795 Anderson Ave., Bldg. 25
Klamath Falls, OR 97603-7891
(541) 883-6916

Medford District

3040 Biddle Road
Medford, OR 97504
(541) 618-2200

Prineville District

3050 NE Third Street
PO Box 550
Prineville, OR 97754
(541) 416-6700

Roseburg District

777 NW Garden Valley Blvd.
Roseburg, OR 97470
(541) 440-4930

Salem District

1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306
(503) 375-5646

Tillamook Field Office

4610 Third Street
PO Box 404
Tillamook, OR 97141-0404
(503) 842-7546

Spokane District

1103 N. Fancher Road
Spokane, WA 99212-1275
(509) 536-1200

Wenatchee Field Office

915 N. Walla Walla Street
Wenatchee, WA 98801-1521
(509) 665-2100

Vale District

100 Oregon Street
Vale, OR 97918
(541) 473-3144

Baker City Field Office

3165 10th Street
Baker City, OR 97814
(541) 523-1256

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